

Newsweek Reports Chairman Towns Changed His Mind on Terror Hearings after White House and Democratic Leadership Intervened

**Friday, January 08, 2010 | House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA)**

Rep. Ed Towns (D-N.Y.) had planned to convene a hearing of the House Government ~~After Democrats~~

[Politico: GOP reps slam Towns, demand terror probe](#)

Republicans on the House Oversight and Government Reform committee accused their Democratic chairman of "dereliction of duty" Thursday evening because of his rejection of a GOP request to hold a hearing on the botched terror attack aboard a U.S.-bound jet. The [usually harsh letter](#), signed by all fifteen committee Republicans save Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), to Chairman Ed Towns (D-N.Y.) calls his response to the security breach "wholly inadequate."

"Your resistance to hold hearings and initiate a thorough investigation threatens to leave the American people with the impression that providing partisan political cover is more important than their safety and protection," the letter reads.

A Democratic committee aide said Towns wants the GAO investigation, but is ultimately open to hearings.

[Boston Globe: Republican slams panel chairman for not holding hearing on terror scare](#)

The top Republican on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee is blasting the panel's chairman for refusing to hold hearings on the failures that led to the attempted bombing of a US airliner on Christmas Day. Representative Darrell Issa of California asked Tuesday for the hearings to look into what went wrong and the intelligence shortcomings.

But committee Chairman Edolphus Towns, a New York Democrat, told Issa today that the Obama administration is already on the case. President Obama said Tuesday that US intelligence should have thwarted the attack, but failed to connect the dots, and is to receive a preliminary report Thursday on the failings.

[New York Daily News: Oversight Smackdown Over Undies Bomber](#)

Issa's office responded with a blast e-mail to the press, subject lined "Surprised? Towns Punts on Oversight." The statement itself, from spokesman Kurt Bardella, was even tougher: *"When two morons decided to breach White House Security, Chairman Towns was one of the first people out of the gate to call for an investigation that included the Oversight Committee. Now, when we've had an attempted terrorist attack over American soil, Ed Towns is silent. It's nice to see that coming into 2010 we can expect the same rigorous oversight Chairman Towns spearheaded in 2009. Since 2001, this Committee has held more than 35 hearings on Homeland Security readiness and inner-agency communication - does Ed Towns really think forfeiting our Committee's oversight prerogatives right now is a good idea?"*

[Politico: Committee passes on terror hearing](#)

One House committee is taking a pass on holding hearings on the botched terrorism attack aboard a U.S.-bound jetliner, opting instead for a Government Accountability Office report on airline security issues.

House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.) sent a letter Wednesday to ranking member Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), bucking Issa's request to hold a hearing on the Christmas Day incident.